

NATIONAL TOWN MEETING

12/10/75 (10 Dec 75)

: This is Josh Darcy, speaking to you from the Eisenhower Theater of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. In the moment another program in the continuing series of National Town Meetings will be getting underway. The topic of this National Town Meeting "Investigating the CIA." The principal speakers will be Congressman Otis Pike, Democrat of New York and William Colby, Director of the CIA.

Following the initial presentations, members of the audience will have the opportunity to present questions to the speakers. These National Town Meetings are aimed at presenting distinguished figures from various fields, discussing with you our radio audience, and with the audience assembled here at the Kennedy Center, some of the most important issues of the day.

And now the moderator of this National Town Meeting, Walter Pinkus, of the WASHINGTON POST.

MOD: For almost 20 years, one or more members of Congress have suggested that the Central Intelligence Agency needed to be investigated. In almost every case in the past the request came because a Senator or a Congressman disagreed with some CIA activity that had popped into public view. In the 1950's Senator Joseph McCarthy wanted to go after what he considered

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Communists in the CIA. In the 1960's, Senator Gene McCarthy wanted to flush out CIA officials who were manipulating organizations, such as the National Student Association, and making them fronts for anti-Communist operations. An irony in this is that one particular CIA official would have been the target of both investigations. He was involved in both programs. Senator McCarthy would have considered him a Communist, the second Senator McCarthy an unreconstructed anti-Communist co-warrior. The only thing this proves is that times change and so do the whims of the public and the roles played by government agencies.

In the 1950's CIA successfully participated in the overthrow of anti-US regimes in Iran and Guatamala. Thereafter, books were written praising those agency operations and there was no complaint. In 1973, a leftist regime in Chile was overthrown and CIA is still trying to make people believe it had nothing to do with it.

And last December, thanks in good part to a series of stories in the NEW YORK TIMES on domestic operations of the CIA, the Senate and then finally the House approved select committees to investigate the agency and the rest of the Intelligence community. Almost a year has passed and the nation has laid before it an unprecedented amount of information about CIA.

Has the surface just been scratched? Or has the agency been permanently scarred? Has Congress done too little or done too much? Has the foundation been laid for future reform or have those reforms already taken place?

And then there is a more philosophic question. Do we as a nation want an agency to overthrow governments, manipulate foreign agencies, subvert foreign news media, possibly cause assassinations of foreign leaders? Or do we want only the results of such operations and no knowledge of how it was done?

There are some practical questions. What information should CIA supply the Congress, who can release that information? Congress alone? Congress and the Executive?

These are just a few of the questions but I think deserve to be faced in a serious discussion of the problem and we have with us Congressman Otis Pike of New York, a member of the House since 1961 and Chairman of the House Intelligence Committee since July. Mr. Pike was given the job after an internal dispute broke out among members of the first committee. Thus he inherited both an enormous task and a staff and only six months to do a job that had been put off for almost 30 years.

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William Colby has at least one pleasant thing with Mr. Pike, they both graduated from Princeton. He has served with CIA for over 20 years and since 1968, Mr. Colby has been near the center of almost all the recent controversial agency operations that have been the focus of much of the Congressional attention. On September 4, 1973, he became Director of CIA in the midst of all this turbulence. He too inherited a staff, an enormous problem and last month he learned from President Ford that he too had only a short time to solve them. (LAUGHTER)

Mr. Colby is to be replaced by Ambassador George Bush, but only apparently after the current Congressional Investigations are over. We will now hear first from Mr. Colby.

(APPLAUSE)

MR. COLBY: I'd just like to make three rather simple points in introduction to this morning's session. First I think is one that all Americans will agree on very quickly, and that is important.-- that Intelligence is and will be important to our nation in the years ahead. It has been important in the past, in the days of the Cold War, I think it will be important in the future as we face the problems of the future - over population, food shortages, nuclear

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proliferation, terrorism, things of this nature, plus the continued existence of closed societies with major weapon systems. And desires for hegemony around the world.

The second point that I would like to make is that, is perhaps a little more debateable but I think it's clear enough and that is that we have the best Intelligence in the world. I think our Intelligence has become a professional operation, both in the analysis function, putting the various things together, and I am not saying that we haven't ever made a mistake, of course we have, and analysis is not the same as looking into a crystal ball. But I think that also the technology that America has brought to Intelligence has revolutionalized Intelligence and brought to our eyes and to our ears things that we could not have dreamed of knowing a mere 15 or 20 years ago.

And lastly the clandestine aspects of Intelligence today are in my view the best in the world. The training is professionalism of the staff who engages in these I think has brought us to a situation where that type of effort does provide returns against, even against the closed societies, the difficult to learn subjects around the world, the imponderable, and the indefinite aspects of our lives on this planet.

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The third thing that I'd like to make, point I'd like to make today, is that Intelligence is American. It is being brought under our Constitution. There is no question about it, that some years ago, Intelligence was one of those unpleasant necessities that should be carried on over in a corner and please don't embarrass all of us Americans by telling us what had to be done and so consequently it was left to itself. Its supervision was poor, it was given very fuzzy guidelines and it was told to go out and do the job. It did the job but in the inevitable result of that kind of a charge there were things that happened that should not have happened. There were mistakes made, there were even misdeeds involved in that experience. And the work that is underway today as a result of the work of the Senate and House Committees and of our general American desire that our government truly be a constitutional one, is the process of bringing Intelligence within our constitutional framework.

It can be done, it will be done by better guidelines, by better supervision, and by continuous effort to keep it doing the things that we Americans want it to do. We think this process maybe a little traumatic to some of us in the Intelligence business who have not been exposed to this degree. I think we are going to have to ask the Americans generally to allow us to have some of

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the necessary secrets of Intelligence and I think we Americans recognize that if an Institution in America needs secrecy, it can be given it. The ballot box, the grand jury proceedings, all these kinds of institutions in America recognize the need for secrecy.

Intelligence needs some secrecy, not total secrecy as it was in the past, but it does need some and I think we Americans are going to run an American Intelligence system in which will be the best in the world ahead where we are going to need it. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

PIKE: There is much in what Mr. Colby said which I would have no difficulty agreeing. I think it is rather a tragedy however that I can sit in a room like this and think of all of the places that a microphone might be planted that I was not aware of. It is a pleasure to be able to talk into a microphone which you can see and I think that - and I am saying this not in any sense in detriment of Mr. Colby, I am making one point right off the bat and that is that what we have been investigating is not merely the CIA but it involves also the FBI and unlawful surveillance of American citizens. It involves the National Security Agency and unlawful surveillance of American citizens. And the CIA is frequently called upon to be the scapegoat, that the label CIA attaches

to too many of these things.

Of course we need some secrecy in the conduct of our foreign affairs. There is no question in my mind that some secrecy is essential to a healthy America and a strong America. But I believe very very strongly that this country has gone way overboard on the issue of secrecy. We classify documents that have no reason for being classified whatsoever. We perform acts that the American people would rise up in righteous indignation against if they were aware of these acts. And I think that if our nation is to stand for what our founding fathers intended for it to stand for, we must be something more than just strong. There has to be some kind of a moral content in America. There has to be a moral content in the conduct of our foreign affairs and so frequently we have seen ourselves doing things only because the Russians were doing it. The Russians are doing this so we have to do it.

If we are going to put ourselves in the same position that the Russians are in, if we are going to perform those acts which they perform. If we are going to conduct our society in the kind of secrecy in which they conduct theirs, haven't they really in a very large sense already won? I think this is the question which we must address as a free nation. Yes we must be strong.

To me, the greatest weakness in America today is not the danger of Soviet arms or nuclear war, it is the fact that millions upon millions of Americans believe reluctantly that their government lies to them. Millions upon millions of Americans have lost faith in the fact or in the concept that the government tells them the truth. They just don't believe it any more. This is the greatest weakness that I see in America today and I think we have to get back on the track of a government which tells the truth to its people and a people which believes in its government.

(APPLAUSE)

MOD: Now it is your turn, the audience to question our speaker. There are floor microphones on the far right and far left aisles, politically arranged.

(LAUGHTER). Please -- please give your name and the person to whom you are directing your question. Over on the left.

Q: Mr. Pinkus.... a ... story of yours this morning. Mr. Colby two painful questions. I ask your most thoughtful comments especially for young Americans on the CIA horrors detailed last night on public TV which Getline(?) captioned "How the CIA grew into a monster." Have it in my hands. And number two, would you recommend that this vivid documentary be installed as part of a permanent exhibition of atrocities

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which have stained our national honor to discourage repetition of the same? (THIS WAS VAN LEER)

COLBY: I have about decided this morning after seeing that documentary which was no please I must say, that I needed to ask for equal time. The ... (APPLAUSE). I found it a very highly contentious and one-sided presentation of a very complicated story and a very complicated history. I think that I can comment at some length at another occasion in the detail of the stories there and I think that consequently that the thing was so one-sided and so partial that it does need a full response rather than just a one-line response.

MOD: Over on the right.

VAN LEER: Not answered.

MOD: Mr. Colby.

COLBY: No I don't believe that - I certainly have no either right or interest to suggest censureship of it, but if you asked whether it is a fair presentation of the history of CIA I would say no.

MOD: Over on the right.

(APPLAUSE)

Q: Mr. Colby, did the CIA in any way have any involvement with the assassination of John F. Kennedy?

COLBY: No.

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(APPLAUSE)

MOD: On my left.

Q: My name is Ruth Blond, I'm from Washington, D.C. My question is directed to Congressman Pike. Will any real reform legislation come out of your Committee for a better Intelligence system?

PIKE: In all honesty I can't say that I know the answer. I hope that it will and I know that or I believe that our Committee will recommend legislation which will combine a decent respect for necessary secrecy with a reasonable oversight of questionable acts. The problem is going to be to get the Congress and the American people to have the will to look at what is going on. It is a lot easier you know for Congress and Congressmen to sit back and second guess rather than to move in and participate in the decision-making process. It takes a lot of will and moral commitment and above all stamina to do this job. What I hope that good oversight legislation will be passed. I think honestly it would make Mr. Colby's job easier and the CIA's job easier. It would make Congress' job a lot more difficult and I hope we have the will to do it.

(APPLAUSE)

MOD: If I can interject a question on this point for Mr. Colby. In the years that you've been director

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and been discussing matters with the Ford Committees in the past that have had oversight responsibility, has there been any time when any member of the House or the Senate has suggested something that you were doing was wrong?

COLBY: Well on one occasion I brought up to the Committee certain things that we did that were wrong. Certainly in the oversight process there have been a number of occasions on which members of either the Committee of the House or the Senate have expressed their opposition to a certain course of action. Not that they said it was wrong in that sense. I don't think that they said it was illegal, they said it was a wrong thing to do. There were situations in which that has happened.

MOD: Question on the right.

Q: Mr. Willridge(?) Washington, D.C.

Mr. Colby would you explain the Phoenix operation in South Vietnam in which you were in charge of. Why were so many thousands of the Vietnamese citizens murdered or killed or whatever - the reports we got, and will this will the government take responsibility for this not happening again ever throughout the world?

COLBY: Well I have testified on the Poenix Program many times before the Congress and spoken publicly about it.

(SOMEBODY YELLING FROM THE AUDIENCE)

To summarize very quickly, the Phoenix program was an attempt to identify who the members of the Communist apparatus and the terrorists were. It was an Intelligence program to try to identify these people so that they could be taken out of the population. And preferably by capture or by getting them to rally. 200,000 people rallied. We captured a certain number of them but in Vietnam at that time there was a very vigorous war going on. And a lot of people got killed in the process and a certain number of those were identified as the leaders of the Communist apparatus. And those figures that I reported to the Congress in 1971, were the figures that we had from the field as to the extent as to the number of people that were captured, the number of people who were rallied, and the number of people who were killed. There was a very energetic effort made to improve the procedures so that they met reasonable standards and eliminate the lawlessness that prevailed the villages and back country of Vietnam in the mid-60s. The Phoenix Program had an effort to improve the legal procedures as well as the detention procedures. I do not say that there was never an abuse. Certainly there were abuses. The abuses occur in wars. And abuses occurred in the Phoenix Program that I did frankly admit.

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But the use of the numbers that I reported is an example of that contentious and one-sided presentation of the case against us without recognizing the circumstances in which the event was happening and the full background of the program and of the activity by the Communists, terrorists whose figures of terrorism victims were quite high also.

MOD: We are also taking questions written down on cards. And one of them is addressed to Mr. Pike or Mr. Colby. I will start with Mr. Pike. Would you comment on suggestions that covert operations be separated from just intelligence gathering and analysis in a separate agency?

PIKE: Yes, I don't -- I don't think that that would be a very meaningful reform. I think that there is no question but that covert action and covert operations should be scrutinized separately and very carefully, apart from Intelligence gathering operations. To set up a new bureaucracy however for the purpose of conducting covert actions separate from Intelligence gathering, I think would be rather meaningless. There is some overlap in some areas of covert action between actions and intelligence. All covert actions are not murders or attempting to rig elections in other countries. There are other covert actions that come very close to

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being of pure intelligence. I don't think that getting another layer of bureaucracy - in other words would be meaningful. I think that oversight, overall of the activities of the Intelligence agencies is required.

One thing I must say, we cannot use the euphamism of intelligence activities to describe the kind of operations which have been conducted in the past. Again, I get back to the basic principles, we have got to tell the truth to the Congress and to the people about what we are doing.

(APPLAUSE)

COLBY: I agree with Mr. Pike, what he said on that. We had an experiment one time 25 years ago in which the covert action operations were separated from Intelligence gathering and they spent half their time trying to find each other. This was really not a very productive exercise and it has worked a little better being combined. I thoroughly agree with Mr. Pike on the need of careful supervision and careful control of such activities.

MOD: On the left.

Q: Mrs. Percy Leon from Sarasota, Florida. I'm rather disappointed Mr. Colby, in that last statement of yours. I was going to ask you if you didn't think that this nieve publicity and action by Congress has practically

ruined the effectiveness of the CIA organization.

(APPLAUSE)

COLBY: This is a situation in which we have had the usual problem of being neither thoroughly black nor thoroughly white. There has been effects on our Intelligence gathering as a result of the publicity and I don't just mean the investigating committees but the other leaks that have occurred in the past year or two. Individuals have decided that they no longer can risk working with us. Americans have said that they no longer can give us the assistance of their companies abroad. Foreigners have said that they are concerned as to whether we can keep the secrets that their services give to us. There has been an effect. But on the other hand, the operations are continuing. I think the daily and the periodic products of our Intelligence are still of the highest quality and I still say they are by far the best in the world.

(APPLAUSE)

MOD: Mr. Pike.

PIKE: If I might just comment on that briefly. First I think that we would all like crime to disappear from the streets of America. But I don't think we accomplish anything in that regard by ignoring the fact that it exists or by failing to report it.

If America is so weak that it cannot stand the truth about itself, then I think it is far weaker than either Mr. Colby or either believe it to be.

Finally, I would like to say that as a result of our inquiry, my personal evaluation of the Central Intelligence Agency has improved. I think more highly of it than I did before I started. I think less highly perhaps of the FBI than I did before I started. And I think as far as the CIA is concerned, it was not a rogue elephant going off by itself and doing things it was carrying out orders which were given to it and I tend much more to question those that gave the orders than those who carried them out.

(APPLAUSE)

MOD: Over on the right.

Q: John Teale(?) Washington, D.C.

I would like to ask a question of the Post and also a comment by Mr. Pike. Don't you think that since Mr. Pike has set this program with a moral tone, wouldn't it be in order first to ask Mr. Colby should be resign as the head of the CIA so we can have a rebirth of confidence in the new CIA? (SURGE OF OHS FROM THE AUDIENCE) And also, I would like to ask Mr. Pinkus, since he is the Moderator, he represents the freedom of the press of the WASHINGTON POST the Katherin Graham(?) empire

has imported a professional union buster from Canada from Canada (BOOS FROM THE AUDIENCE) we would like to know why -- we'd love to know why, this is no reflection on Mr. Pinkus why the POST isn't telling the truth, why they brought in this professional union buster. (LOTS AND LOTS OF BOOS)

PINKUS: Well we will have to have a panel on labor practices some other time (APPLAUSE)

PIKE: Of the first question of course, I'm afraid that the question is as the lawyers say moot. (LAUGHTER) (APPLAUSE)

MOD: The question has come up on a card from Steve Taylors, for Mr. Colby, and that is, how can the United States justify its contribution to the Civil War in Angola?

COLBY: Well I am not at liberty to talk about the United States activities in that area. This is in line with our refusal to discuss such activities by any official. I do think it important however in an Intelligence appreciation of what is going on in Southern Africa to note the extent of the Soviet airlift of arms to one of the factions in the -- in Angola. The fact that African nations on four occasions in the past year have tried to bring about a coalition between all of the three factions there. That there are something

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on the order of 4,000 Cubans working for the factions supported by the Soviet Union. That there are 122 mm. rockets, tanks and so forth that having been given to that faction, and that there is clear evidence of Soviet desire to expand its influence in that area and to support one faction against the other factions in Angola. The other factions also fought the liberation struggle over these years but somewhat as has happened in other areas, the Communists are very monopolistic about the degree of control they wish to have in a situation such as that.

MOD: Can I interject myself in this and put a hypothetical question to Mr. Pike. If I can say hypothetically that the United States is supplying assistance to elements of the Angolan peoples movement, one of the different groups that is fighting for control of that country, and if I can hypothetically say that members of Congress have been informed about that how does the Congress itself decide how we become involved in Angola?

END SIDE ONE

START SIDE TWO

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..besides publicly whether there is a U.S. interest in Angola and how the American people if all this is going on, to make some kind of determination as to whether we should be involved in this, if in fact it is done covertly and can't be discussed publicly by government officials.

PIKE: Well first of all I think I understand your question. (LAUGHTER) If we are to become involved in a civil war in Africa, I take the position that we should not become so involved without the American people and the United States Congress knowing about it. That's number one.

(APPLAUSE)

Informing -- In forming questionnaires I have always known that I can get any response I want if you let me frame the question. (APPLAUSE AND LAUGHTER) And I believe that the Administration can get any response it wants from Congress if they control the information which is given to Congress as they make their presentation. What has happened in the past is that terribly few members of Congress have been presented with loaded information on huge issues and Congress has gone along with them accordingly.

I am not saying this was done by the CIA. I am saying

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this was done by the Administration, both Republican and Democratic, there is no, there is no line here whatsoever, there has not been legitimate oversight because there has not been legitimate information available to Congress. How we can - you are asking how we can conduct such secret operations in the future. I simply say that when you get to the point of involving yourself in a civil war, then the American people have a right to know what we are doing.

(APPLAUSE)

MOD: On the left.

Q: My name is Gus Shick and my question is Congressman Pike. Employees of the CIA undergo intensive background investigations and periodic polygraph investigations. Employees of the FBI intensive backgrounds, most members of the Executive Branch - if Congress demands access to Intelligence community information, would Congressmen and their staff people be willing to submit to background investigations?

(APPLAUSE)

PIKE: As to Congressmen, my guess is that the answer would be no. (LAUGHTER) My guess is - well let me go on a little further. One of the Congressmen on my Committee demanded an FBI investigation of himself.

before he went on the Committee. And I said "Who is going to read your FBI investigation? Who is going to evaluate whether you are fit to serve on this Committee or not? I said, I guarantee you you're not going to blame me for your youthful peccadillo." Now as for staff we have had FBI investigations of every single member of the staff. I am appalled by the quality of the investigations. I thought they were just superficial and asked most of the wrong questions. And I did say to the members of the staff that frankly that if all they had to show for their lives thus far were a couple of speeding tickets and a traffic light I was embarrassed for them. (LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE)

MOD: Over on the right please.

Q: (NAME INAUDIBLE) from Washington, D.C. This is really a two-part question. First of which is - I guess to both panelists. What they see as the need for covert as opposed to Intelligence gathering activities. The second question is why not publish for the American people at least the totals CIA budgets?

(LAUGHTER)

: For openers I am wholly in favor of publishing, at least the total CIA budget. I will only say that the figures given to us in even the most

secret of documents don't represent the total which is spent by the CIA or under the control of the CIA. So I think we have to do more than just public the figures which they give us. We have to analyze the figures. As to the other question, I am not opposed to all covert action. I think that some covert actions are meaningful and useful and proper.

COLBY : If I may carry that on, with respect to covert actions, I believe that these are a response to the world in which we live. During the Colder days of the Cold War, when we were engaged in a worldwide confrontation with the Soviet Union and its allies, there was cause for a great deal of effort in this field because otherwise we were going to be overcome in various parts of the world and our strength reduced. In recent years we have done much less because the change in the world climate has been such that we have been called upon to do much less. As you look into the future though, will there be occasion in which a little quiet help to some friends in a country can ensure their control of that country and their control of that country's military resources and their control of that country's desire to move into a nuclear weapon of its own, or will we see it go to some other group with designs

hostile to the United States. There are situations in which it will be in our nation's interests and I believe in the interests of world peace generally for that kind of moderate, sensible approach to be taken by other nations and for that kind of people to be running those nations, thanks to some help that we may have been able to give them quietly.

With respect to the budget question, I have taken a position that it should not be made public. We had that out on the floor of the House and the House voted this year 260 to 140 that it remain secret. The reason, not because this year's single budget would be any great problem, although it would be of certain help but rather in a very short time we would get to the immediate question why did it go up? Why did it go down? What does it include? What doesn't it include? And we would repeat the experience of the Atomic Energy Commission which started out in 1947 with a single line figure, total for our weapons expenditures in atomic energy, and last year's budget presentation was 15 pages of detailed data on our weapons expenditures.

Now I think the same thing would happen to our Intelligence structure and within a very short time the secrecy would erode and we would be providing a great number of details which would be of great

assistance to the countries concerned about our Intelligence activities and trying to blind us from things that they don't want us to know.

(APPLAUSE)

MOD: There have been a number of questions that fit in one category and I will try to sum them up in one general question for Mr. Pike. They have the tone of can you recall any other great power, roughly the Soviet Union, Great Britain, France, Germany, that has - if one question says -washed dirty linen in front of the public the way the United States has in the past two years?

PIKE: The answer is no, by the same token I think the American Constitution is a rather unique document and I think that our abiding strengths in the world is the fact that other nations look at us and say, "Well by golly they are doing all this but isn't it a free society."

(APPLAUSE)

MOD: To the right.

Q: My name is Alex Socewell(?) I would like to address a two-part question, the first part is directed to Director Colby and the second part to Congressman Pike. The first part of the question is -

At what point will we continue to sanction the interference in the internal affairs of other countries and the second part is, and what assurance can be provided to the American people that the current probe on the legal covert operations isn't only political window dressing?

COLBY: Well with respect to the first part, I believe I answered it in my previous question about the future of covert action. That there are situations in which it should be conducted provided it is conducted under firm control according to our laws.

PIKE: As to trying to convince the American people that what is being done is not just political window dressing, we don't have an awful lot of power over that. People in the media, can play what we are doing any way they want to play it and people all human beings, tend to believe that which they want to believe. And they hear that which they want to hear. And I can I can no more control the thinking of Americans as to what we are doing than I can control what the media says about me, which is not always pleasant. And I can only do the very best job I can to do the task which was assigned to us by the House of Representatives and let the chips fall where they may as to what the public thinks about what we're doing.

(APPLAUSE)

Q: I would like to go back a few years, of course it was 1922, Disarmament Conference, Geneva, when we put restrictions on armaments, (INAUDIBLE) other countries did. The follow-up of that was the Russians leading and ... completely, totally disarm. Now to lead into our question here. Isn't all this Intelligence directly related to the escalation of armaments? And how in the world can we stop our Intelligence in the midst of a continued Cold War?

MOD: Who is it directed to? Either one of you or both?

COLBY : I think the reference to the 20's is a good reference because I think that during the 20's many people in the world shared the belief that the world had been made safe for Democracy. We took a brand new battleship out of Cape Hattaras and we sank it to show that we believed in naval disarmaments. Secretary Simpson closed up a code breaking unit because he said that gentlemen don't read each other's mail. Secretary Simpson about 15 or 20 years later of course was reading as much German and Japanese mail as he could and we needed that battleship. (LAUGHTER)

(APPLAUSE)

Intelligence tries to bring an accurate perception of what is going on in the world. It does

its best to be objective and independent and not reflect the passions and enthusiasms of every moment. It tried to call the dangers in the world - to point out that democracies are really not the majority of the world. They are only 30 odd countries out of the 140 United Nations members who really could be called democracies in any reasonable sense of the world, we are very close to being an endangered species. And I think that we need Intelligence to warn us of the threats around the world. I think that Intelligence is providing us however an ability to negotiate about those threats rather than merely to deter or to defend ourselves against them.

The SALT agreements depend upon our Intelligence ability to monitor whether the other side agrees and follows the agreements made. If the other side would not allow us to visit their country and inspect and if they don't run a free press, where we can see what kinds of weapon systems they are, we need Intelligence to see whether we can confidently make an agreement to reduce the expenditures on both sides in these enormous weapons systems that have been developed.

(APPLAUSE)

PIKE: I don't have any trouble agreeing with what Mr. Colby says, if it worked. The problem is

that anybody who can confuse next year's defense budget, which I believe is the largest defense budget in history in peacetime, with total disarmament is just plain not looking at what is going on as far as where your tax dollars are going.

The second is, the second point I would like to make is that one of the things that our Committee has been looking at in our Intelligence investigation is our inability to predict what is going to happen in other countries, our inability to predict what is in fact happening today in other countries and I was criticized loudly earlier, for saying something that I will say again, and that is with all of our intelligence gathering capabilities, the way we handle our Intelligence in America today, is such that my belief that if an attack were to be launched on America we would not be aware of it.

(APPLAUSE)

COLBY: As I have stated on various other occasions I deny that statement.

(APPLAUSE AND LAUGHTER)

I do not believe that Intelligence is a crystal ball that can predict with precision the future. But I think what Intelligence does today is to raise the consciousness of our governmental officials, including our Congressmen, and even our public through the briefings given to the

press and to the Congress about events, so that they are better informed about things abroad. I think our perception of events abroad has on a number of occasions allowed us to act in a fashion which has avoided a crisis abroad by having identified its likelihood some time in advance. And I think that as for a threat to the United States from abroad, I think we are well-equipped with intelligence of not only the capabilities but also the current intentions of the major nations which could actually threaten the United States. (APPLAUSE)

MOD: If I can deal with one aspect of that and raise a question for Mr. Colby because it does present a problem both for the press and I think for the public and the Congress, going back to Angola, the American press, particularly in Angola has been made fully aware as you have this morning, of the total Soviet-Cuban effort in Angola, and I think that has been brought directly to the attention of the American people. My question is how do the American people make a judgement on the U.S. role in that sort of operation? Or any similar operations given the fact that no similar information as to what's going on on the other side is made available to those same journalists?

COLBY: Under a law passed in December of last year, the CIA is not permitted to conduct any

activity abroad other than Intelligence gathering unless this is the result of a finding by the President that the activity is important to the national security and secondly, it is reported in a timely fashion to the appropriate committees, count them six, of the Congress. Any activities of the CIA other than Intelligence gathering abroad are within the requirements of the law.

MOD: Go one step further then, would there be objection if either committees that hand out these reports or individual members then made that information available so that the public...

COLBY: There are certain activities which by definition, if they are going to be secret they are -- they cannot be made publicly available. President Ford once said that he would be delighted to share our secrets with 214 million Americans provided it didn't go outside of that group. (LAUGHTER) But that is not a practical matter -- way of doing business.

I think the law that I referred to does establish the committees of the Congress as, what they are called, representatives of the American people and their judgements are expressed in the briefings that they receive.

PIKE: I just have to say that I find this concept preposterous. Here we are.. (APPLAUSE) Here

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we are involved what? Not in intelligence gathering, not in even the assassination of somebody, it is a war going on over there. That's what it is. It's a war. And for us to sit here in this room, in this nation, a free nation with a free press and read in our press day after day about what the Soviets are doing, but having no knowledge as what America is doing is to me a travesty on our Constitution.

(APPLAUSE AND A BOO)

MOD : Without really beating a dead horse but I have all the advantages, could I ask (LAUGHTER) could I ask you Mr. Colby if there are 4,000 Cubans in Angola and there is a substantial Soviet involvement in place on the ground, from who are we keeping secrets as to what the United States is doing?

COLBY: We are doing exactly what the Russians are doing which is to say no comment.

(APPLAUSE - SOMEONE YELLED)

MOD: There are two questions that deal with the future and I would like to try to get to those. Mr. Pike would you please evaluate the pros and cons of a Congressional Committee on Intelligence as against returning to the situation that existed prior to the establishment of your committee and Senator Church's committee?

PIKE: Well I think the pros lie in the fact that if you could have a new joint committee on Intelligence with a revolving membership, a limited period of time on the Committee, and perhaps more important a revolving staff so that Mr. Colby's beguiling manner would not co-opt them all in the early days of the Committee, you could get reasonable oversight by Congress and you could also make it possible for them not to have to brief six separate committees on Congress on what they were doing. You could improve the bureaucratic process. The difficulties with it are largely political. Hell hath no fury like the Committee Chairman whose jurisdiction is threatened. And we would have a real problem in establishing it because you can't establish the kind of committee that I would like to see without removing the jurisdiction from those six committees which have it now and if we were only going to add one more committee to Mr. Colby's problems even I would not be in favor of it.

(SLIGHT APPLAUSE)

MOD: Mr. Colby I know it's difficult for you in your present position to do this but if you could project yourself forward to a time when you don't have your current responsibilities, do you have any

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ideas on a possible reorganization of the Intelligence community and perhaps a different role for the Director of CIA or as has been discussed a new Director of Intelligence who would then have control over all elements of the Community.

COLBY: There of course, drawing bureaucratic wiring diagrams is a favorite Washington pastime. I really think that the points that I made earlier, the need for better guidelines and for better supervision of our Intelligence from the outside, are the keys to making our Intelligence conform with the Constitution and do the job that it's called upon.

There are innumerable variations of putting the Director downtown, separating him from CIA. Dividing the CIA into different pieces. Having a different relationship with some of the defense intelligence activities. Use.... options there are quite numerable. And we are going to look at them. The Administration is looking at them, the Congress is undoubtedly looking at its own variations that it is looking at, and in the workings of this American constitutional process, something will come out at the end.

I think in the process I am a little conservative usually about the benefits to be brought from

a sweeping reorganization because the turbulence and the upset frequently are very costly affair. I believe the CIA is an entity which has established a certain moral, a certain strength and confidence in its function and one should be a little careful before one scatters it to the wind in some search for some new potential solution. So I think I really can't comment on the specifics of it, pros and cons on both sides and I think they will be fully debated in the months ahead.

MOD: Over on the left.

Q: James Rose, San Jose, California.

I would like to ask Director Colby if any violent actions in the last five years has been directed against individual Americans and if so, compensation or some understanding has been reached with them later?

COLBY: No violent actions have been taken against Americans.

MOD: Over on the right.

Q: This is directed to Mr. Colby.

Based largely on Operation Phoenix, which was responsible for the assassination and torture of tens of thousands of civilians in South Vietnam alone, there is a process going on right now to have you formally excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church. I would like your comment?

The process is already underway.

COLBY: Well I'll let the process continue to work.

(LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE)

MOD: We are coming down to the end of our time. Do either one of you have a closing comment?

PIKE: I think this discussion has revealed our essential differences as I think they are not as great as might be presupposed by some of you. I think we both believe in a strong and effective Intelligence gathering operation. I think we both actually agree that we have a strong Intelligence gathering operation. I think where we come to the parting of the ways is where we come down on the issue of strength through secrecy as opposed to strength through honesty and to me as I said at the outset, what is needed most in America is to make our people believe that their government is an honest government and that their government tells them the truth. And if our people believe that the government is an honest government doing the best it can, telling the truth, that will contribute more to our strength than any degree of secrecy can ever do.

(APPLAUSE)

COLBY: I think Mr. Pike said it very well. I think that the need for renewed public confidence in our government and our Intelligence service is there. When I went into the Intelligence Service, some years ago, I frankly never anticipated sitting in this audience like this discussing the activities of the Intelligence Service, but I think it's a necessary thing and I think we have done what we could to react to this requirement of our people for confidence in their service.

We have changed some things in our Service to conform better with our Constitution. We will have some additional changes probably imposed on us through Legislation and through new procedures. I think we in the Intelligence business welcome this because we realize that we are protecting the American Constitution. That is what we swore to protect when we took our jobs. And I think we can arrive at a necessary compromise between those secrets that are necessary to provide Intelligence as a means to protect America and those secrets that aren't necessary and that consequently should not be kept secret. And we are going to hammer those differences out in this process, constitutional process, but I think that the American people are going to be content that their representatives knows some of the secrets that cannot

be shared with 214 million Americans because they would go to the other people in the world who might have designs against us. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

MOD: I want to thank Mr. Pike and Mr. Colby and thank the audience for joining us here today. We hope you will all be back when the National Town Meetings resume again later this month.

(APPLAUSE)